

Walloon Lake Boating Access Site

August 31, 2005 Public Meeting

Boyne City Public Schools Administration Building Gymnasium

Mr. Bill Boik, Department of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Division, moderated the meeting, which began at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Introductions:

- DNR Staff (Mr. Boik provided introductions of DNR staff present)
- M.C. Smith Associates and Architectural Group, Inc.

Background/Overview:

Mr. Boik provided some history and introduction to existing sites on Walloon Lake through a powerpoint presentation.

Presentation of Plan (M.C. Smith Associates and Architectural Group, Inc.):

Mr. Mike Smith, M.C. Smith Associates and Architectural Group, provided an overview of the proposed plan using a PowerPoint presentation. Design elements included a paved entrance drive off of Sunterra Trail, paved parking for 20 car and trailers, one barrier free paved parking space, one lane concrete launch ramp, barrier free pedestrian access ramp, vehicle turn around, retaining walls, dredging, skid pier, vehicle maneuver area, and vault toilet facility.

Public Comment Period:

- Member of Mackinaw Forest Council. Unique area, truly old growth forest. Last remnants of old growth forest.
- Use village site for a boating access site. DNR land is remote if fires or emergencies occur.
- Lake belongs to everyone. Opposes this boating access site to protect old growth forest and lake.
- Member of Michigan Boating Industry. No real change in number of boats on lake with launch. Quoted Michigan Acts. Site is not a new launch. Safe launching is not adequate currently.
- Not a property owner, but visits lake. DNR has done a great job in presenting this. Many kinds of birds, migrating birds. Birds will not survive with this launch. Property will not be the same with this.
- From out of state. Sees eagles and foxes. Unique treasure here. Maintain public access to this old growth forest.
- Pristine beauty. Picnics on lake with kids. Strolls near lake with kids.

- Sounds of wind and birds. Large trees present. All animals and plants work together. Need peaceful, untouched refuge. So few of these places left. Don't do anything to disturb this. Preserve and protect it.
- Protect forest and protect riparians. Old hemlock there for 225 years. Need independent Environmental Impact Statement. Cutting trees is against DNR mission. Trash accumulation, other factors closed this site.
- No easement provided. What about Sunterra Trail and Erickson Roads? Policing not discussed. No camping, but Camp Daggett does. Use site for quiet site-kayaks. Sees animals on site.
- Few spots in Michigan with a lake and an old growth forest on one site. What about pollution and camp fires? Safety? In favor of access to lake, but avoid using this land for this purpose.
- Dangerous road for walking, jogging, and horse-back riding. Bad site for launch- any worse site? High expense to make road upgrades. Look at sites and improve ones near hard surface roads. Once land is gone, it's gone forever.
- Who is in charge of maintenance of Sunterra Trail?
- Site was closed due to inadequate enforcement. A party site. No impact regarding invasive species is false.
- No one making suggestions. State is not hearing it.
- Not many places to put in boat. No parking for boat trailers. Not looking for private lake. Hopes Bay Township is not responsible for this site-bad maintenance on other sites-same with State for a boating access site. Hopes to have a different site for this.
- Never saw anyone use former access. Bad roads to it. Opened up to vehicle traffic is a waste. Destroys area. Walloon Lake Village boating access site is better.
- Is there a formula to determine need of boating access sites on lakes? How many then? Is there is size limit to the type of boats?
- Enjoyed natural beauty of lake. No opposition of a boating access site on lake. Address other accesses. Roads too narrow and site too remote. Focus on Foot.
- Environmental Consultant. Environmental reasons not to do this. Water quality is in danger. Rare habitat because there are few undeveloped uplands. Look for another site.
- Hard lake to fish. With boating access site, boaters will come to this site. Humans will screw this up with trash, asphalt, etc. Bring in cow birds which kill animals. Increase noise. Use the Village site.
- Bay Township Planning Commission member. Mitigate the two uses-Township recreation plan of low impact passive recreation and the DNR boating access site plan.
- Hard to launch on lake. Owns a sailboat. Repair Sumner Road. Launches do not provide enough clearance.
- Felt denied from Walloon Lake because of no access. Village not adequate with current launch. Need more access. Too beautiful a lake not to have access.
- Thanked DNR for letter response. Will use drawings and other information to determine their stand (Walloon Lake Association).

- Keep off limits to fires. Gravel roads not beneficial for boats. Supports this access to Walloon Lake.
- What about preliminary cost estimates? When will they be available?
- 100 year old trees. This is a climax forest. Improve existing boat launches at a fraction of building this one.
- Tom Bailey Letter. Look at other properties. Site was a picnic area. Doubt any one ever drove their boat trailer down there.
- High conservation value to forest. Shoreline environment very rare. Protecting and maintaining these areas should be done. Don't open up to other people.
- Hopes DNR continues this endeavor. Stop cottages from being built. Village property-DNR outbid to purchase land. DNR is stocking fish so allow this boating access site. Keep as a public lake.
- Worked with FMFM to preserve this land. Once lost, it cannot be recovered. Make appropriate sites to build.
- Do people's comments really mean anything? This will be creating a drainage problem and parties. Send the money for this project to New Orleans. Walloon Lake doesn't need a Wal-Mart.
- Lives on Sunterra Trail. Hard time not hitting each other in their cars. Will create bad situation on inbound roads. Take money to fix accesses on lake.
- Whose idea is it to have access there? Complaints of lack of access on Walloon Lake? How many additional boats with this boating access site?
- Wildwood Harbor Road has been identified as M-75 on the location map. Fire department not able to assist if a boating access site and fires occur.

Public Question and Answer Period:

- Why not improve existing sites? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Why this site and not the others? What is the rationale? DNR-PRD provided response.
- What are your plans on improving inbound roads? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Where are these rangers? DNR-Law and DNR-PRD provided response.
- What is response time? DNR-Law provided response.
- Does DNR care if locals say no about this proposal? DNR-PRD provided response.
- How much access is enough? DNR-PRD provided response.
- What are other accesses that DNR has developed? DNR-PRD provided response.
- What does DNR think about impacts to this land? Has DNR thought about the impacts? DNR-PRD and DNR-FMFM provided response.
- How many of boats are already on lakes and how many want to get on lake? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Why not have the Forester here to talk about trees? Response not provided.
- Why haven't the comments sent in been responded to? DNR-PRD provided response.

- How do you perceive your responsibilities with Waterways Commission? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Is there a written process available for public review? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Any other access points being considered? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Is DNR FMFM going to have open hearings on this? When? DNR-FMFM provided response.
- What about addressing grades? M.C. Smith provided response.
- Why do you (DNR) think you will police it better this time? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Melrose Township Supervisor-Look into Village for boating access site, but need people to let Township know this.
- With a boating access site in Village it would spur economic development in Village.
- What about buying property? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Does the DNR have powers of eminent domain? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Does the DNR go to this expense on other projects for preliminary concepts? DNR-PRD provided response.
- Waterways Commissioner Chairman-Buying property is extremely expensive. Send letters supporting Village site if you are in support of this.
- Would the Waterways Commission Chairman be willing to work with the Trust Fund or is there a person that will drive this to look at overall of Walloon Lake? Waterways Commissioner Chairman provided response.

Meeting Adjourned:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.